

Highlights from MoDOT Director
Pete Rahn's State of Transportation address
to Missouri legislators

Bite-sized

“In his State of the State Address, Governor Blunt issued a challenge to even further speed up our efforts to improve Missouri’s highways. He challenged MoDOT to complete the Smooth Roads Initiative by the end of 2006---- a full year ahead of schedule. It will not be easy, but we will meet the governor’s challenge. When we do, it will be progress you can feel...in record time.”

“There is no doubt, 2006 will be even bigger—in fact, the biggest year in Missouri’s highway construction history. That’s unprecedented progress. Progress you can feel!”

“A sage once said, “The shortest distance between two points is . . . under construction.” Well, we demonstrated that in 2005 with over 1,000 work zones from border to border.”

“However, in 2010 the construction bubble bursts and our construction program will diminish by over \$600 million a year annually.”

“The sun is shining on transportation in Missouri, but there are storm clouds on the horizon. Good old Missouri common sense says that you fix the roof when the sun is shining not once it starts raining. It is imperative that we initiate a discussion about future transportation investments.”

“In Missouri, stretches of I-70, for instance, that are now nearly 50 years old were designed to last just 20 years. By 2030, the entire length of I-70 will be stop-and-go traffic and I-44 is just ten years behind.”

“I-70 needs to be rebuilt from the ground up and needs to be expanded to accommodate ever-growing traffic and the ever-larger vehicles using it. A total reconstruction would cost more than \$3.5 billion dollars.”

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“Due to unique circumstances involving a new Mississippi River Bridge, we are asking the General Assembly to authorize the creation of an innovative public/private partnership to construct a sorely needed new river crossing in St. Louis. Analysis by the Missouri Department of Economic Development shows a 16 to one return on investment for this project. I urge you to pass this vital legislation quickly.”

“Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the new MoDOT! An organization committed to innovation. Our approach is economical, but our success will be enormous. We are listening to you. We are working with you. We are showing you progress like never before – progress you can feel!”

“MoDOT employees are doing more, but like other state employees they have not received a significant pay increase in five years. Therefore, I ask the General Assembly to pass a four percent across-the-board pay increase for Missouri's dedicated state employees. Missouri has a lot of things to be proud of – being last in state employee pay isn't one of them.”

“We could save 90 lives per year through a primary seat belt law. Now, I realize this issue may not be universally popular, but I feel a moral obligation to appeal to you once again for a primary safety belt law. Not because it is necessarily popular, but because it is right.”

“MoDOT is your action agency. We dream big, and we deliver big. Gone is the indecisive bureaucracy. Arrived is the more nimble organization that gets things done. The department that produces real progress. Progress you can feel.”